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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/738,351	12/16/2003	Ivan Sepetka	005-004-C1	9651
32746	7590	12/12/2006	EXAMINER	
HOEKENDIJK & LYNCH, LLP			TRUONG, KEVIN THAO	
P.O. BOX 4787			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
BURLINGAME, CA 94011-4787			3734	

DATE MAILED: 12/12/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.



## DETAILED ACTION

**Note: This is in response to the Amendment filed 09/18/2006.**

### ***Double Patenting***

1. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

2. Claims 39-50 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 2, 9-13, 17, 18, 23, and 24 of U.S. Patent No. 6,663,650. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the relatively broad subject matter claimed in the instant application such as an elongated obstruction removing element is used for removing obstruction in body when the elongated obstruction removing element is in the expanded configuration, which would have been obvious in view of the relatively subject matter of the patent claims.

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3. Claims 39-44 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-6 of U.S. Patent No. 6,824,545. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the relatively broad subject matter claimed in the instant application such as an elongated obstruction removing element is used for removing obstruction in body when the elongated obstruction removing element is in the expanded configuration, which would have been obvious in view of the relatively subject matter of the patent claims.

4. Claims 39-44 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-6 of U.S. Patent No. 6,730,104. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the relatively broad subject matter claimed in the instant application such as an elongated obstruction removing element is used for removing obstruction in body when the elongated obstruction removing element is in the expanded configuration, which would have been obvious in view of the relatively subject matter of the patent claims.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

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6. Claims 39-50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Engelson (U.S. 5,749,894).

Note in figures 1-11, wherein the Engelson disclosed the claimed invention.

7. Claims 39-50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Mirigian et al. (U.S. 5,700,258).

Note in figures 1-12, wherein the Mirigian et al disclosed the claimed invention.

8. Claims 39-50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Kent et al (U.S. 5,853,418).

Note in figures 4-11, wherein the Kent et al. disclosed the claimed invention.

9. Claims 39-50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Chee et al. (U.S. 5,304,194).

Note in figures 1-8, wherein the Engelson disclosed the claimed invention.

### ***Response to Arguments***

10. Applicant's arguments filed 09/18/2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. In response to applicant's argument that the cited references (Engelson, Mirigian, and Ken) are directed to the devices for implanting in the body rather than removing an obstruction, a recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim.

***Conclusion***

11. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

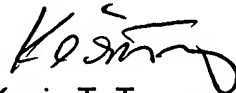
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kevin T. Truong whose telephone number is 571-272-4705. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM..

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Kevin T. Truong  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3734

ktt